

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 1-25 are now present in this application. Claims 1, 8 and 10 are independent. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ruckl in view of Beyer et al. or Klein. Further, claims 3-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ruckl in view of Beyer et al. or Klein and further in view of Urlichs, and claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ruckl in view of Beyer et al. or Klein and further in view of Rinaldi. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Complete discussions of the Examiner's rejections are set forth in the Office Action, and are not being repeated here.

The Examiner states that Ruckl discloses a C-shaped ring 21, 28, 29 with a disc 27 at one end and an extraction means 37 at the other end. However, if only the lower bow 28 is considered the C-shaped ring, both the disc and extraction means are at one end. If both the lower bow 28 and upper bow 29 are considered the C-shaped ring, both the disc and extraction means are in the middle of the ring. Clarification of what structure constitutes the C-shaped ring and how the disc and extraction means are at opposite ends of the ring is respectfully requested.

Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that the suction duct 37 of Ruckl brings the workpiece into close contact with the rollers 22' and does not function as an extraction means. The ends of the lower bow are closed, as seen in Figure 9. The closed ends allow suction to be generated within the channel. If the suction means 37 creates an air flow within the channel, the airflow would be in a counter-clockwise direction. If the workpiece were rotated in a counter-clockwise direction, the rotation would be opposite to the air flow and fumes and particles could not enter the channel formed by the lower bow. If the workpiece were rotated clockwise, the rotation and air flow would be in the same direction but fumes and particles would not be able to enter the channel because of the closed end. The invention has both a rotation and air flow in the

clockwise direction, as seen in by the arrow A in Figure 4. The extraction means 14 captures the vapors and particles within the channel, a function not possible with the closed channel of Ruckl. Therefore, even if a hood, such as disclosed by Beyer or Klein, were used, the modified structure of Ruckl would still not have any element that could be considered the claimed extraction means.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Ruckl, Beyer and Klein, for the reasons explained above. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

With regard to dependent claims 2-7, 9, 11, 12, 20-23 and 25, Applicants submit that these claims depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1 which is allowable for the reasons set forth above, and therefore claims 2-7, 9, 11, 12, 20-23 and 25 are allowable. In addition, these claims recite further limitations which are not disclosed or made obvious by the applied prior art references. Reconsideration and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 8, 10, 13-19 and 24 are allowed and that claims 9, 11, 12 and 20-23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the early indication of allowable subject matter in this application. However, claims 9, 11, 12 and 20-23 have not been rewritten in independent form at this time, since it is believed that independent claim 1 from which these claims depend is allowable.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

In view of the above response, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Christopher J. McDonald, Registration No. 41,533, at the telephone number of the undersigned below to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees required during the pendency of the above-identified application or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448.

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Respectfully submitted,

By


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